DR. ALI SHARIATI

ARCHITECT OF NATIONAL AWAKENING AND HERALD OF MODERN THOUGHT

BY **ABU HAYYAN SAEED**
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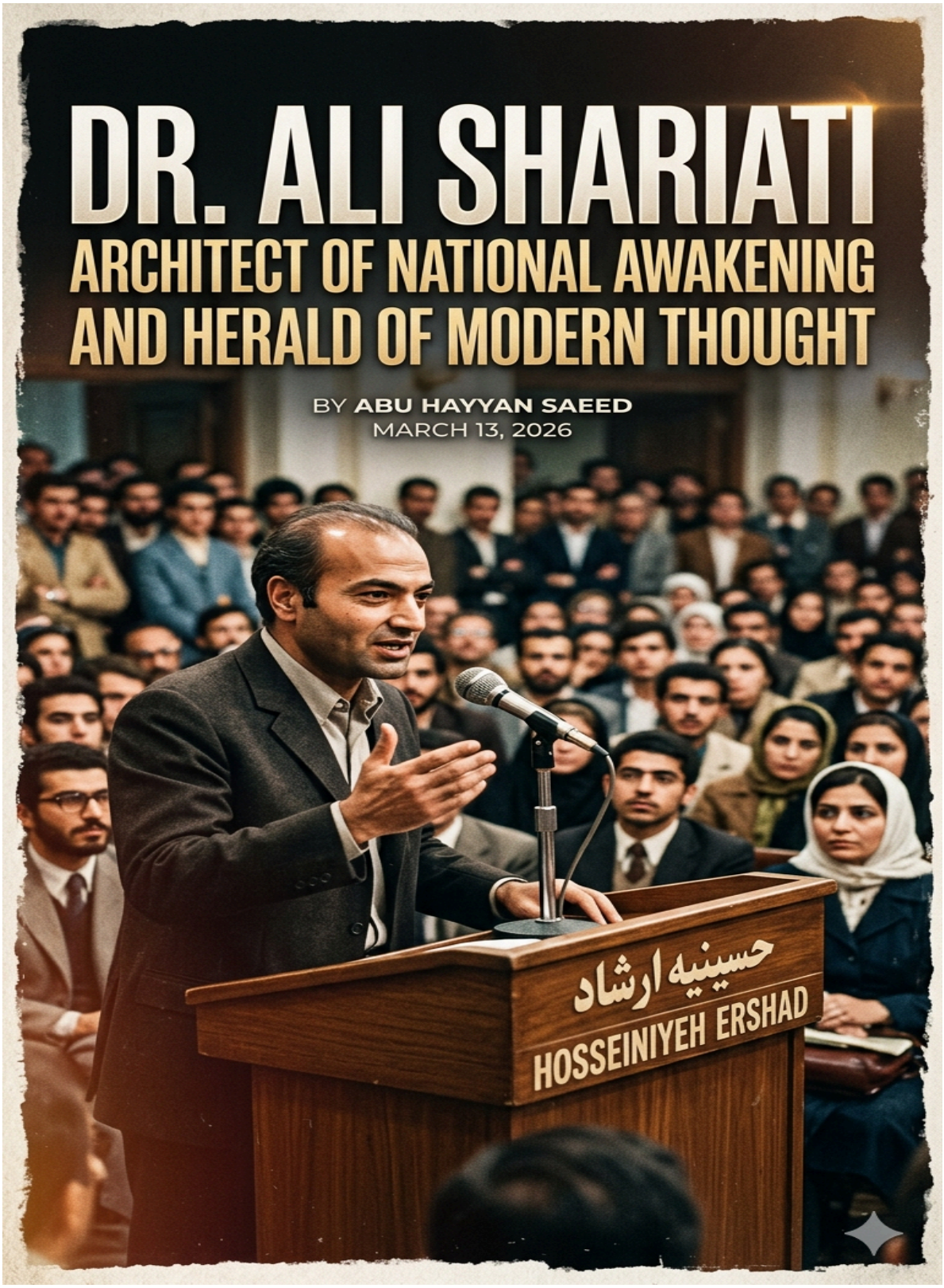

Dr. Ali Shariati:

Architect of National Awakening and Herald of Modern Thought.

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> "I have finally realized that living for God is a far more difficult task than dying for God." — Dr. Ali Shariati

The Context of Resistance

To engage with this discourse, one must first comprehend the Iran of 1970–1977. It was an era where the sun of the Iranian Monarchy blazed with imperial arrogance, while a stagnant, "opium-like" clerical establishment held the masses in a decades-long spiritual slumber. Tyranny, whether manifested in a crown or a robe, is fundamentally allergic to social reform. In this suffocating atmosphere, Dr. Ali Shariati emerged as a beacon of hope, paving the path for revolution through the intellectual force of his writings and oratory.

Dr. Ali Shariati (1933–1977) was a genius of the 20th century, rightfully honored as the **"Teacher of the Revolution."** He raised the banner of truth at a moment when Iranian society was crushed between the anvil of the Shah’s autocracy and Western imperialism, and the hammer of a clerical class that had distorted the true spirit of Islam.

The Voice in Hosseiniyeh Ershad

Imagine thousands of students, intellectuals, high-ranking officials of the Shah's regime, and representatives of the clergy gathered in Hosseiniyeh Ershad. A profound silence fills the hall, broken only by the resonant, echoing voice of Shariati. He proclaimed:

> "Abu Bakr as-Siddiq (AS) is the embodiment of resolve and steadfastness; Umar bin al-Khattab (AS) represents courage and valor; Uthman bin Affan (AS) personifies generosity and sacrifice; and Ali bin Abi Talib (AS) is the magnificent culmination of all these noble qualities found in his predecessors."

When a traditionalist in the crowd raised a sectarian chant, Shariati challenged the status quo: *"You have turned Ali bin Abi Talib into an idol, something to be worshipped but not followed. You may weep, beat your chests, and cry out in devotion, but if you fear the true 'knowledge' (Marifat) of Ali, it is only to avoid the responsibility of implementing his character in your own lives."*

Revolutionary Philosophy

Shariati's wisdom is encapsulated in these timeless aphorisms:

- **"I have finally realized that living for God is a far more difficult task than dying for God."**
- **"The Quran, which came to give life to nations, has been relegated by us to the graveyards, to be recited only for the dead."**

Just as Voltaire and Rousseau provided the intellectual spark for the French Revolution, Shariati prepared the collective mind of Iran. In a life of only 43 years marked by 22 years of study, 9

years of teaching, and over 7 years of exile and imprisonment he achieved what others could not in a century.

The "Whole Man" (Al-Insan al-Kamil)

At the heart of his philosophy is the **"Whole Man."** Shariati argued that a complete human being must balance four dimensions:

1. **Self-Awareness:** Knowing one's purpose in the universe.
2. **Social Responsibility:** Feeling the pain of the oppressed and standing against tyranny.
3. **Liberty:** Freedom from ego, material greed, and meaningless tradition.
4. **Creativity:** Acting as God's vicegerent to bring positive change to the world.

Red Shi'ism vs. Black Shi'ism

Shariati used the metaphors of **"Red Shi'ism"** (the religion of martyrdom and justice) and **"Black Shi'ism"** (the religion of mourning and status quo).

- **Red Shi'ism** is a political manifesto for the "Mustad'afin" (the oppressed).
- **Black Shi'ism** is the tool of the "Muliyat" (clericalism), which uses religion as an anesthetic to keep the people silent in the face of injustice.

The Triple Alliance of Oppression

Shariati identified a historical formula of exploitation that he called the **"Triple Alliance"**:

- **Force (The Pharaoh):** Political Tyranny.
- **Wealth (The Korah/Qarun):** Economic Exploitation.
- **Deception (The Balaam):** The treacherous religious leaders who use faith to serve the powerful.

During Hajj, Shariati interpreted the stoning of the pillars (Rami al-Jamarat) not as a mere ritual, but as a symbolic strike against these three robbers of human history.

The Eternal Conclusion

Dr. Ali Shariati was not just a political rebel; he was a "Spiritual Physician." He proved that as long as religion remains an **"Institution"** rather than a **"Movement,"** it will remain a tool for exploitative forces.

Today, as we navigate a world where consciousness is considered an "unpardonable crime," Shariati's call reminds us that true devotion is not found in slogans, but in breaking the stagnation of our era. We must choose between a religion that acts as an opium or a religion that acts as a catalyst for awakening.

Only the name of Allah remains; all else is ephemeral.